

SUPPORTING WILDLIFE RESCUE CENTERS CAFTA-DR



Aplomado
Falcon

As part of the Environmental Cooperation Program under the Central America-Dominican Republic-United States Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Oceans, Environment and Science (OES), in partnership with Humane Society International (HSI), is helping to establish wildlife rescue centers, as well as to strengthen and support existing centers in the CAFTA-DR region. Since its inception, CAFTA-DR has successfully strengthened trade and investment relationships and the CAFTA-DR Environmental Cooperation Program has provided opportunities for trade-related environmental cooperation. Wildlife rescue centers are an excellent example.

Worldwide, illegal trade in wildlife is big business. Wildlife and wildlife products worth billions of dollars cross borders illegally each year. The CAFTA-DR countries, with support from the U.S. government, are working to stem this illegal trade, which undermines the conservation of the region's biodiversity and impacts local communities that rely on resources damaged by the trade. Cooperative efforts in capacity building and education to halt the spread of illegal trade in wildlife are necessary to fight this growing challenge.

To reduce the damage from the trade, the region needs functioning wildlife rescue centers for animals that are confiscated at borders, airports and elsewhere — centers where they can be housed, treated, rehabilitated, and released back into the wild, if possible. The release of endangered and threatened species may serve to support wild populations as part of a comprehensive plan to address threats to their survival.



Ocelot

Through OES funding, HSI is helping to establish, strengthen, and support existing rescue centers in the CAFTA-DR countries. Specifically, HSI is:

- Collaborating with the CAFTA-DR governments and local NGO partners to develop strategies for rescue center sustainability;
- Training rescue center staff and volunteers on the provisions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);
- Providing grants to local rescue centers to purchase desperately needed medicine and supplies, and improve their infrastructure;
- Helping to develop a network of rescue centers and animal welfare organizations in the CAFTA-DR region;
- Working with local rescue centers to develop or enhance fundraising mechanisms;
- Offering technical assistance to rescue centers on animal nutrition, rehabilitation, and release programs; and
- Developing extensive outreach efforts and educational campaigns aimed at stopping the illegal trade in wildlife.



Spider Monkeys



White-Fronted Parrots

Contact Information for the
U.S. Department of State;
Bureau of Oceans, Environment, and Science.
CAFTA-DR Program:
Office of Environmental Policy,
Division of Trade and Environment,
(202) 647-9312



United States Department of State



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